

G77 & China warns of failure if no radical change in approach

Poznan 12 Dec (By Meena Raman) -- The Group of 77 and China has told Ministers at the Poznan climate talks that there is a likelihood of failure in meeting the objective of the Bali Action Plan, unless there is a radical change in approach and mindset and serious confidence building measures.

This warning, together with a listing of the slow progress and failures so far, were given by the Chair of the group, Ambassador John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, at the opening session of the high-level Ministerial segment of the Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC on 11 December.

The group said it had come to Poznan with 6 expectations, including getting the Adaptation Fund and the LDC Fund operational, to get an initial response from developed countries to the G77 and China proposals on finance and technology, and an atmosphere of negotiating in good faith and in a transparent manner. None of these expectations have been met, said Ashe.

The group also set out actions which is said was needed as a minimum: discuss how Annex I countries intend to reduce their emissions; seriously negotiate provision of finance and technology to developing countries and focus on core issues in a balanced way.

It described as “bordering on the immoral” and counterproductive the current approach of Annex 1 Parties to demand binding commitments from others as a precondition for action on their own long outstanding

commitment to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Ashe said that in Bali, the Parties resolved to enhance the implementation of the Convention and to that end, they decided to launch a comprehensive process, to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at the 15th session of the Conference of Parties in Copenhagen.

He said that the Bali decision was reached against the backdrop of three things:

- The Fourth Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report which put beyond doubt the fact of serious climate change, perhaps beyond reversal and the role of human beings in accelerating the change;
- The fact that Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHGs) of Annex 1 Parties continued to increase after 2000, when under the Convention they should have peaked and begin to fall, and
- That Annex 1 Parties have not delivered on their commitment to enhance the transfer of technology and to increase financing to developing countries, to meet the full cost of adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change and facilitate their mitigation actions.

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There was an atmosphere of great urgency, he said. "In Bali, our decision therefore gave a two year work plan, but required a mid-point review of progress. We are at the end of that review. Is it therefore appropriate to ask what has the report on the past year one tells us? Where are we in the process? Are we likely, on the present trajectory, to have within the next year, the comprehensive report envisaged in the Bali Decision and Bali Action Plan?"

He added that developing countries, encouraged by the high level statements by some Annex 1 countries especially since the third meeting in Accra, came to Poznan expecting that commitments would be placed on the table to unilaterally cut its GHGs by 20% and to not go above that if all Annex 1 Parties made similar commitments. "We are yet to hear that clear statement from this group," said Ashe.

"In the areas under the work programme of the Subsidiary Bodies and Working Groups, the G77 and China had expected here in Poznan, at a minimum that we will have to

- (i) take actions and decisions to make the Adaptation Fund established under the Convention operational;
- (ii) the least developed country fund operational;
- (iii) the mandate of the consultative group of experts to be renewed so that the Group can resume its functions;
- (iv) the Annex 1 Parties to begin to negotiate their emission reductions for the post 2012 commitment period;
- (v) developed countries provide initial responses to the G77 and China submissions, especially the submissions on financial mechanism and technology transfer which were circulated since the Accra meeting; and more broadly,
- (vi) a sense of commitment to negotiate in good faith and in an open and transparent manner.

None of these expectations has been met, said Ashe. "In the assessment of the Group, we are unlikely to achieve the Bali objective in the absence of radical change in approach and mindset and serious effort at confidence building."

To that end, said Ashe, the following needs to be done as a minimum:

-- Start discussion on how Annex 1 Parties intend to begin to reduce their emissions now and the targets they intend to commit to for 2012 to 2020 and beyond. The current approach of Annex 1 Parties to demand as precondition for action on their long outstanding commitment, binding action by others borders on the immoral and is counterproductive;

-- Begin the process of negotiations on the mechanisms and approaches for effective provision of adequate financing and the transfer of low GHG technologies to developing countries;

-- Begin to discuss cooperative approaches to research and development which could scale up and facilitate the availability of technologies which would allow for sustainable development at the level required for countries to meet other internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs and

-- See a focus on the core issues, in a balanced manner, as demanded by the Bali Action Plan..

Ashe said that the G77 and China is committed and reaffirm its commitment to the type of outcome envisaged in the Bali decision and Bali Action Plan. "To that end, the Group has submitted concrete and detailed proposals on critical elements such as a financial mechanism and a technology mechanism as well as our views on mitigation and shared vision. The Group remains committed to a decision at COP 15," he concluded.